

Steps to Buying a property in Romania

1. Find your property. Start by deciding on the type of property and location you are interested in. Whether a newly-built coastal apartment, a villa in a skiing resort or a city centre flat, or maybe just a plot of raw land, define your objective clearly from the onset. This will help focus your efforts and reduce the time, energy and money spent in the process. If you are buying land or the property has land with it and you want to own the land, set up a Romanian company.
2. Negotiate the price and make a verbal offer. Once you decide what you want to buy, find out a reputable property consultant and/or estate agent and inform them about your requirements. They should be able to find a suitable property or plot of land for you. When you have a list of offers that meet your criteria, fly over to Romania and view and scrutinise each offer thoroughly. If you see something that you like on this visit, you can start negotiating a better price and if satisfied make an offer. When your offer is accepted, proceed to step two.
3. Complete basic legal checks (use a reputable solicitor). A legal adviser will carry out the basic checks, establishing mainly the seller's right to sell, i.e. the authenticity of his title deeds, the contract showing when they bought the property (or land), etc.
4. Sign a preliminary contract (be extra careful with the terms of this contract) and pay a deposit (10-30% as agreed with the seller). If the basic legal checks are successful, you can sign a preliminary contract and for a small deposit (10% with private sellers, higher usually with companies selling off plan) so you can secure your property. Pay special attention to the terms of this contract, as in many cases it contains the specifics of how and when the rest of the payments will be made.
5. Have the solicitor perform additional checks. The full checks are now carried out by the solicitors. They will now look for any charges and debt of any kind on the property or land under offer. If they don't find anything wrong, you can proceed to the final step.
6. Make final payment (70-90%), sign the notary deed and pay stamp duty and the notary fee - With all checks successfully completed you can make the final payment and finally sign to the full contract, usually in front of a notary or solicitor. In many cases, part of this step is incorporated in step three, by making the preliminary contract into a full contract. In either case, the notary would have to authorise the transaction and you'd be required to pay stamp duty and notary fees.